

REMARKS

Claims 27-54 are active in this application. Claim 27 is amended. Support for the amendment to claim 27 is found throughout the Specification, Drawings, and Claims, as originally filed, especially Figure 5 and page 17, line 6. Therefore, no new matter is added upon entry of the amendment.

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Chakrabarti for the courteous discussion granted to the Applicants' undersigned representative on December 9, 2003.

During this discussion, the Examiner explained the basis of the rejection in view of Müller (US 5,151,162). Additionally, Applicants' representatives described the novel features of the invention. In view of this discussion, Applicants' present an amendment that clearly defines the claimed invention over the cited references.

In particular, it is noted that the present invention is not described in the references cited by the Examiner because these references do not describe *producing a plurality of microwells in the resin layer*, as currently claimed.

The rejection of claims 27, 29, and 37 as being anticipated by Müller (US 5,151,162) is obviated by amendment. Müller does not describe *producing a plurality of microwells in the resin layer*. Müller describes depositing polypyrrole on the surface of a working electrode, followed by coating the surface of the polypyrrole with "a film of ion exchange resin" (col. 5, ll. 16-42). Upon deposition of polypyrrole on a graphite surface (Example 1), Müller may produce a polypyrrole layer with irregularly shaped *peaks and valleys*, but Müller does not produce the presently claimed microwells. It is noted that the production of these peaks and valleys is necessarily dependent upon the irregular topographical properties of the substrate. Therefore, Müller neither implicitly nor explicitly discloses the active step of producing "microwells." Thus, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

In addition, the rejection of claims 28-31, 38-40, 42-43, 45, 46, and 50-54 as being obvious in view of Müller and Teoule (U.S. 5,837,859) is obviated by amendment. Neither Müller nor Teoule describe producing "microwells." Therefore, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection in view of the amendment and the following comments.

Teoule describes depositing pyrrolic copolymers on the surface of a working electrode which resides on top of a substrate, and does not describe the active step of producing microwells. Teoule describes electroconductive polymer/nucleotide copolymers that can be deposited onto one or more electrodes (see col. 5, lines 5-32). These coated electrodes can be further fixated with a biological probe such as, for example, an oligonucleotide.

Therefore, Teoule and Müller either separately or in combination do not describe *producing a plurality of microwells in the resin layer*. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Moreover, the additional rejection of claims 32-34 and 47-49 as being obvious in view of Müller, Teoule, and Livache (Nucleic Acids Research (1994); 22(15): 2915-2921) is obviated by amendment.

As discussed above, the limitation of *producing a plurality of microwells in the resin layer* is not described in the combination of Müller and Teoule. The introduction of Livache as an additional reference does not make up for the deficiencies present in Müller and Teoule. Thus, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

In a similar vain, the rejection of claims 35-36 as being obvious in view of Müller and Simon (J. Am. Chem. Soc. 1982; 104: 2031-2034) is obviated by amendment for the reasons outlined above. It is requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Conversely, the rejection of claim 41 as being obvious in view of Müller, Teoule, and Lizardi (US 6,316,229) is obviated by amendment. The combined references do not disclose

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a method that *produces a plurality of microwells in the resin layer*. Therefore, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

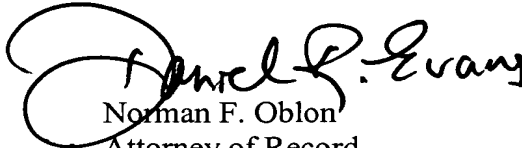
Finally, the rejection of claim 44 as being obvious in view of Müller, Teoule, and Heroux (US 6,312,896) is obviated by amendment. The combined references do not disclose a method that *produces a plurality of microwells in the resin layer*. Therefore, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

The combined references do not disclose a method that *produces a plurality of microwells in the resin layer*. Therefore, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Applicants submit that the present application is ready for allowance. Early notice of such allowance is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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